

D-11 wants more opinions on student paper guidelines

Palmer article on gay teens stirs talk about restrictions

By Wendy Y. Lawton/Gazette Telegraph

On Wednesday night, the Colorado Springs School District 11 school board spent hours listening to students, parents and activists weigh in on an article on gay teens in the Palmer High School newspaper.

But they want to hear even more.

They're asking people to write with suggestions about what restrictions or requirements — if any — should be stitched into guidelines for student newspapers and magazines.

Board members want more opinions because the article struck a deep chord with the public.

Most of the people who packed the board meeting strongly supported the story, which ran in the Oct. 24 issue of *The Lever*. Late in the evening, a handful vigorously opposed it, saying it promoted homosexuality.

"There is genuine concern on both sides of the issue," board member Bruce Doyle said. "So please give us your input."

"We'll take whatever time it needs to get this policy right," board President S. Kent Olvey vowed.

The policy review was prompted by objections to the front-page article, which chronicled the

trials of homosexual teens.

Two parents called Palmer Principal Jay Engeln to complain the story was inappropriate, and Will Perkins, chairman of Colorado for Family Values, also voiced his disapproval to Engeln. Soon, school board members started getting calls on the topic.

D-11 Superintendent Kenneth Burnley asked D-11's attorneys to draft a proposed policy, one that would give principals and faculty advisers broad powers over what student journalists can print.

For example, they could quash a story that could be seen as advocating drug, alcohol or tobacco use or irresponsible sex. A story also could be vetoed if it could associate the school with a position on politically controversial or sensitive issues.

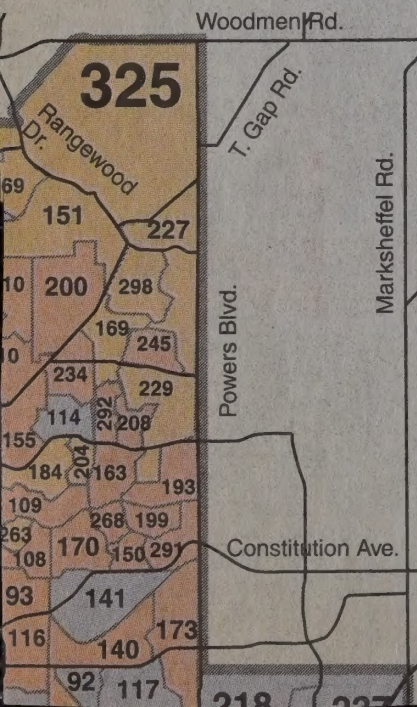
Right now, the district's policy bans only stories that are obscene, libelous, violate privacy rights or create a "substantial disruption" at school. The rules are patterned after state law.

Board members said they could end up keeping the current policy, passing the new proposal, or approving something altogether different. Much of the outcome will depend on public opinion, they said.

To submit suggestions to the school board write: Publications Policy, Colorado Springs School District 11, 1115 N. El Paso St., Colorado Springs, CO 80903-2599.

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t 11 was won by getting support from
was the case in 1995, the strongest
district, where a majority voted against
northeast neighborhoods of the



Cadet gets flu season's first case

Shots should be effective in controlling new virus

By **Dennis Huspenl**

Gazette Telegraph

An Air Force Academy cadet has contracted the state's first confirmed case of influenza this season, state health officials said Thursday.

The 20-year-old man is a foreign exchange student, but no other information about his identity or condition was re-

■ Times and locations for
getting a flu shot/B9

cent of the estimated 12,000 people in El Paso County who received the shots.

The cadet was tested Oct. 31 and the influenza strain was discovered earlier this week. For more official